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10,000 die from Soviet chemicals, US asserts

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WASHINGTON - The United States accused the Soviet Union yesterday of waging genocide through the use of chemical and toxin weapons in Afghanistan, Laos and Cambodia.

In an intelligence analysis sent to Congress, Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig alleged that the Soviets, aided by their allies in Vietnam and Laos, have for the last seven years conducted a "genocidal campaign against defenseless peoples."

The analysis claimed credible reports of more than 10,000 deaths in Laos, Cambodia and Afghanistan from the use of toxins, nerve gas and other chemical weapons. Copies of the 32-page analysis were also provided to the UN secretary general and to every member country of the world body.

While Haig and other State Department officials said the purpose of making the report public was to put the pressure of world opinion on the Soviet Union to halt such practices, it is expected the Reagan Administration will also seek to reconvene a meeting of the signatories to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention of 1972. The Administration would there air its allegations and seek to write compliance provisions into the agreement.

Earlier this month in an interview with The Globe, Eugene Rostow, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, said the Administration "almost surely" would seek such a meeting in Geneva to demand explanations from the Soviets both about the alleged use of toxin weapons and about an anthrax outbreak in Sverdlovsk in 1979 at a suspected biological weapons manufacturing facility.

At a State Department briefing yesterday, one official, Gary Crocker, said a mysterious new agent used in

"Only an alert and outspoken world community ... can bring sufficient pressure to bear to halt these violations," Stoessel said. "With the publication of this report, the world community has been alerted. The United States will continue to be outspoken; we are confident that other nations, as they recognize the danger, will do likewise."

State Department officials insisted that their report has nothing to do with the Pentagon's efforts to gain support for a nerve gas modernization program. The allegations were first investigated and publicized by the Carter Administration, one official noted, and added that the latest study is but a more rigorous and comprehensive analysis of information that has been gathered since 1975. The months' long study was done by the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

Officials also insisted that their allegations of Soviet failure to comply with the Geneva Protocol of 1925, outlawing chemical and biological warfare, and of the 1972 convention banning biological and toxin weapons, do not represent an attempt to suggest that arms control agreements should not be sought with the Soviets because of their poor record of compliance. They do show that scrupulous verification and compliance procedures are required in any future agreements, one official said.

Afghanistan has been nicknamed "the silent death" because it kills without any warning and "freezes" its victims in the positions they are in when it strikes.

"The Soviet Union and its allies are flagrantly and repeatedly violating international law and international agreements," asserted Walter Stoessel, deputy Secretary of State.